

FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 25, 2006
Minutes

The Evening Session began at 7:03 p.m.

Commission Members Present:	Alan Duke, Chairman Robert White, Vice Chairman J. Denham Crum Fern Hines Michael Cady, BOCC Liaison Joseph Brown III Joan McIntyre
Commission Members Absent:	None
Planning Staff Present:	Steve Kaii-Ziegler, Director of Planning Jim Gugel, Chief Planner Denis Superczynski, Principal Planner I Caryl Wenger, Recording Secretary

COMMENTS

Mr. Cady stated that the Board of County Commissioners met on Tuesday, January 24, 2006, to discuss the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding the manner in which Region Plan Updates are handled. The County Commissioners voted to keep the process the same as it is today for the Walkersville Region. The Comprehensive Plan and the Rezoning Map will be considered in one process. With the help of the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners, Staff has committed to try and complete the process within the 2006 calendar year. The new process will be implemented for the Thurmont Region Plan and subsequent Region Plans.

MONROVIA TOWN CENTER PUD -- R-05-06 -- Public Hearing

75-80 Properties, L.L.C., et al, -- requesting 408.91 acres of land be re-zoned from Agriculture (A), R-1 (Low Density Residential), and R-3 (Low Density Residential) to Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Mr. Gugel gave an overview of the request. Mr. Superczynski presented the Staff Report. There was some discussion about the Route 75 problem, and to what extent this project would help in solving the need for better roads. Mr. Superczynski stated that this project is not intended to be a rich solution to the road problem.

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Mr. Brown asked whether the project would be “mass-graded.” Mr. Superczynski stated that he would allow the applicant to answer the question in depth, but that it was apparent to him that many of the design decisions were being driven by the topography.

Mr. Brown stated that he was concerned that this project and the Green Valley project would severely impact the Urbana traffic flow. He went on to say that Ed McClain Road would end up being the ultimate shortcut in the County, and that, to be consistent with the Green Valley area plans, new specifications for Ed McClain Road should include a 21-foot setback from centerline for a ditch line as opposed to the 14-foot setback currently specified.

Applicant

Krista McGowan, Attorney for the Applicant, outlined the project for the Planning Commission. She stated that this project would be subject to a restrictive deed covenant limiting occupancy of all units in the project to at least one person age 55 years or older, and would prohibit permanent residents under the age of 19 years. She further stated that it is her belief that any project, in later years, that would attempt to convert the community to one that included children, would have to be retroactively retested for Adequate Public Facilities Schools, and would be required to pay retroactive impact fees.

Mr. David Ager, with Townscape Design, LLC Project Planner for the Monrovia Town Center, briefly described the elements of the Plan, and presented the design illustrations.

Mr. Mike Smariga, of Harris, Smariga & Associates, addressed the issues of infrastructure and road costs with regard to the project.

Ms. McGowan then outlined the potential benefits this project would bring to the community.

Public Comment

Six persons spoke in favor of the proposed town center, while three persons spoke in opposition. Two persons were neither for nor against the proposal, but rather, voiced their concerns and asked that the project be rethought to preserve more wetlands and forestlands. One person spoke on behalf of an organized group, and stated that they had no formal position on the project, but asked that it not turn into another “Urbana,” and that the vote be deferred for the purpose of gathering more information.

Questions from FCPC

Mr. Cady then questioned the amount of acreage to be designated for the proposed Emergency Services campus.

Rebuttal

Ms. McGowan stated that it was always her client’s intent to give the Emergency Services Campus as much land as was needed, and that currently, it appears that the site for the Fire and Rescue Substation will be approximately 4-1/2 acres.

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Ms. McGowan further stated that Federal, State and County regulations govern wetlands and forestlands, and that the applicant will abide by those regulations throughout the approval process. She went on to say that she and her client would continue to work with the Greater Monrovia Civic Association, and that they would also work with Staff on the wording of the conditions to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. McGowan then requested the Planning Commission's approval of the application.

Decision

The Planning Commission then voted to close the public hearing, and to hold a minimum of one workshop within the next sixty-two (62) days to assimilate the information received, with key agencies/departments attending for the clarification of specific issues

Motion: McIntyre, 2nd by White
Vote: 6 – 1 – 0 – 0
For: Duke, Crum, Hines, White, Brown, Cady
Against: Crum
Absent: None
Abstain: None

The meeting ended at approximately 10:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Caryl J. Wenger, Recording Secretary

Alan E. Duke, Chairman

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